CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1   1.   An apparatus comprising:

2   a processor;

3   a framer controlled by the processor;

4   a memory coupled to the processor, the memory storing a first set of

5   configuration information and a second set of configuration information, the first

6   set to configure the framer to communicate across a communication network using

7   a first networking protocol, the second set of configuration information to configure

8   the framer to communicate across a communication network using a second

9   networking protocol; and

10   an interface module having a network interface and to detect a

11   networking protocol for which the apparatus should be configured.

1   2.   The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the interface module comprises:

2   a connector to couple the framer to the communication network, the

3   connector having a plurality of contacts, a first contact of the plurality grounded;

4   a resistor coupled between a power supply and a second contact of the

5   connector; and

6   a detector coupled to the second contact to detect a voltage at the second

7   contact, the detector driving a selection between the first set of configuration

8   information and the second set of configuration information.

1   3.   A system comprising:

                a first networking device operating in a first networking protocol;

3   a cable coupled to the first networking device;

4   a second networking device coupled to the cable, the second

5   networking device automatically identifying from the cable the first networking

6   protocol and driving itself into the first networking protocol.

4.   The system of claim 3 wherein the cable has a connector at each end,

2   the connector having a plurality of unused contacts, and wherein the second

3   networking device has a power supply coupled through a resistor to at least one

4   unused contact when the cable is coupled to the second device.

1   5.   The system of claim 4 wherein the second networking device

2   comprises:

3   a network interface module that identifies the cable protocol.

1   6.   The system of claim 5 wherein the detector signals a software switch

2   which selects a first set of configuration data to configure the device in a first

3   protocol if the voltage is at the predetermined level and selects a second set of

4   configuration data to configure the device in a second protocol if the voltage is not

5   at the predetermined level.

1   7.   The system of claim 4 wherein the second networking device

2   comprises:

3   a detector to identify if a voltage at the cable side of the resistor is at a

4   predetermined level.

1   8.   The system of claim 3 wherein the cable has an RJ-48 connector at a

2   first end and a BNC connector at an opposing end.

1   9.   A method comprising:

2   coupling a pair of networking devices together with a cable;

3   detecting in a first device of the pair from the cable a mode of the

4   second device; and

5   driving the first device into the protocol detected.

1   10.   The method of claim 9 wherein the protocol is one of T1, E1 balanced,

2   and E1 unbalanced.

1   11.   The method of claim 9 wherein detecting comprises:

2   watching an unused contact of a cable connector for a predetermined

3   voltage level.